



**Connecticut Conference
United Church of Christ**

125 Sherman Street
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**Testimony in Support of H.B. 6932:
An Act Concerning Paid Family Medical Leave
Submitted by, Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate
Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ
March 5, 2015**

Senator G6mes, Representative Tercyak, and distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

I am Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate for the Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ, and I am writing today in support of House Bill 6932: An Act Concerning Paid Family Medical Leave, which would expand the current family and medical leave system and to provide paid time off for such leave.

I am writing on behalf of the 240 congregations and more than 73,000 people in our state's churches. In fact, the United Church of Christ (UCC) is the largest Protestant denomination in Connecticut. Nationally, the UCC has more than 5,700 congregations with nearly 1 million members. In 1988, the assembled delegates and ministers of the Connecticut Conference met and voted on a Resolution on Workplace and Family Life. That Resolution encourages public policy such as medical and leave benefits.

While the passage of the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was a step forward when it was enacted in the early 90's, it is not currently working for most employees. Seventy-eight percent of those eligible for FMLA do not take it because they can not afford to lose pay. Further, many employees are not even eligible for this unpaid leave because their employer does not meet the size requirements. When employees have access to paid family and medical leave, they are happier and more productive in the workplace. The system that is being suggested would be fully funded by employees with no employer contribution. According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, the cost to Connecticut employees would be a quarter of one percent of someone's income. Contributions would be calculated by a percentage, therefore, lower wage employees would pay less.¹

California, Rhode Island and New Jersey offer paid family leave and several other states are considering legislation. As a state and country that supports family values, we should be doing more for our workers.²

The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ therefore urges the Labor and Public Employees Committee to support House Bill 6932: An Act Concerning Paid Family Medical Leave, which would expand the current family and medical leave system and provide paid time off for such leave. People deserve access to paid time off if they are seriously ill, having a baby or taking care of a family member. We do not think workers should have to choose between their health or the health of a family member, and their jobs.

Thank you for your work and the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of House Bill 6932.

Blessings,
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¹ CT Campaign for Paid Family Leave

² CT Campaign for Paid Family Leave



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